



## Text Messaging and Youth: Programs, Services, Policy and Research

### TOBACCO

#### **SmokefreeTXT**

<http://smokefree.gov/smokefreetxt>  
<http://teen.smokefree.gov/>

A mobile-based (text messaging program) smoking cessation intervention designed for teens and adults across the United States who are ready to quit smoking. SmokefreeTXT was created to provide 24/7 encouragement, advice, and tips to help individuals stop smoking for good.

### MENTAL HEALTH

#### **Text 4 Teens**

National Alliance on Mental Illness-North Carolina

<http://naminc.org/support-and-education/text-4-teens/>

Text 4 Teens is a new program that offers teens who might be dealing with difficult situations (Drugs and Alcohol; Depression; Suicide; Bullying; Relationships; Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender issues; Problems at home, school, on the bus) a way to text anonymously to receive support that they might be too embarrassed to get elsewhere. It is strictly confidential and available in some counties in NC.

#### **PreventionPays Text Message Services**

<http://www.preventionpaystext.com/index.php>

An organization that provides a texting platform that enables responders to communicate by text message via a PC, laptop or any wireless enabled device. The application allows staff to easily accrue a listserv, and create appointment reminders, crisis support, weekly tips about vaccinations, or tips on improving one's health seeking behavior, i.e. life coping skills, sex info for teens, or tips/advice about chemical dependency. According to the organization's website, used by 2 states (Nevada and Minnesota) who have received Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention grants.



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## GOVERNMENT POLICY ON TEXTING

### Health Text Messaging Recommendations to the Secretary (2010)

USDHHS Text4Health Task Force

<http://www.hhs.gov/open/initiatives/mhealth/recommendations.html>

### Social Media Guidelines and Best Practices: Text Messaging

CDC

<http://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/tools/guidelines/pdf/textmessages.pdf>

## RESEARCH ON TEXTING

### Seattle & King County (Washington) Public Health – Emergency Preparedness

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/preparedness/texting/optin.aspx>

Text Communications research and publications on issues such as getting people to opt in to emergency preparedness text messages; summaries of “types of texters”; what target populations want from text messaging; what the public wants from text messaging; texting deaf populations and school based health centers. 2 resources to find and or view on this website: 1) video: Texting 101: Chapter 2 What our audiences want from public health department text messaging programs; 2) 4 Types of Texters Among Young Adults in Urban Environments Age 18-29 (search for this title on the website – it will bring you to this pdf publication).

### How Americans Use Text Messaging

Pew Internet & American Life Project

<http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2011/Cell-Phone-Texting-2011/Main-Report.aspx>

A 2011 report. Results show that young adults stand far above all other demographic groups when it comes to their usage of text messaging. Fully 95% of 18-29 year olds use the text messaging feature on their phones, and these users send or receive an average of 87.7 text messages on a normal day (with the median user in this age group sending or receiving 40 text messages per day). The youngest adults (those between the ages of 18 and 24) are even more proficient in their texting habits. Both cell ownership and text messaging are nearly universal among:



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- 18-24 year olds—95% own a cell phone and 97% of these cell owners use text messaging—and the number of daily text messages this group creates or encounters on a daily basis is far and away the largest of any group:
- 18-24 year olds send or receive an average of 109.5 text messages per day—that works out to more than 3,200 messages per month. The median 18-24 year old texter sends or receives 50 texts per day (or around 1,500 messages per month).
- One quarter of 18-24 year old text messaging users (23%) report sending or receiving more than 100 texts per day.

Just over one in ten (12%) say that they send or receive more than 200 messages on an average day—that equals 6,000 or more messages per month. To put these numbers in comparison, the average of 109.5 texts per day among 18-24 year olds is more than double the comparable figure for 25-34 year olds, and twenty-three times the figure for text messaging users who are 65 or older.